

October 29, 2003

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 are pending in this application. Claims 1-12 have been rejected.

Claims 1-12 have been canceled without prejudice and rewritten as new claims 13-29.

New claims 13-29 are directed to a laminated non-woven fabric where at an interface between layers, only a top and/or a bottom surface of a layer, is in communication with only a top and/or a bottom surface of a subsequent layer. Support for new claims 13-29 appears throughout the specification and claims as originally filed.

No new matter has been added.

In view of the newly presented claims and the remarks set forth below, further and favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

I. At page 2, paragraph 2, of the Office Action, claims 1-12, have been rejected as anticipated by Kamei et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,609,947).

The Examiner states that Kamei et al. teach the invention as claimed in present claims 1-12.

Claims 1-12 have been canceled without prejudice, and rewritten as new claims 13-29.

Anticipation under 35 USC § 102, requires that a single prior art reference disclose each and every element of the claimed invention.

Kamei et al. require a multi-layered non-woven fabric where the layers are laminated by subjecting the stacked layers to a pressurized stream of water, thereby producing a laminate where the fibers from an upper layer are entangled with fibers of a subsequent lower layer. Kamei et al. require these interposed entangled regions in order to achieve filtering. Further, Kamei et al. also

October 29, 2003

require decreasing pore size from a top layer having a larger pore size and oriented to receive media to be filtered, to a subsequent bottom layer.

Kamei et al. do not teach or suggest laminating layers using heat methods, or any other methods which do not result in the entanglement of fibers between layers. In fact, Kamei et al. teach at col. 1, lines 33-37, that laminated fabrics produced by heat fusing suffer from a rapid increase in filtering resistance at the interface (because there is no entanglement). Kamei et al. solve the problem of shortened life by providing entangled zones interposed between the layers.

New claims 13-29 are directed to a laminated non-woven fabric where at an interface between layers, only a top and/or a bottom surface of a layer, is in communication with only a top and/or a bottom surface of a subsequent layer.

This requirement of communication between surfaces only, excludes the required entangled zones of Kamei.

Regarding claims 1-29, Kamei et al. does not teach or suggest, a non-woven fabric laminate absent “entangled zones”, as required by the present claims.

Regarding claims 26-27, Kamei et al. do not teach or suggest, the heat resistor separator including the recited specific layer combinations, as required by new claims 26-29.

Regarding claims 28-29, Kamei et al. do not teach or suggest, laminating layers using heat and/or compression, as required by present claims 28-29. In fact Kamei et al. require lamination using a stream of water in order to create the required “entangled zones.”

In view of new claims 13-29, and the remarks set forth above, it is submitted that Kamei et

Amendment Under 37 CFR §1.111
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Reply to Office Action of **August 20, 2003**

October 29, 2003

al. do not teach each and every element of the claimed invention, as required for anticipation under 35 USC § 102. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw this rejection.

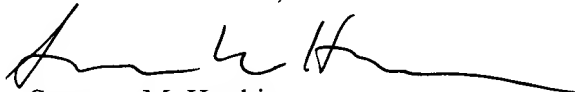
In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, it is submitted that the claims as amended, are in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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